

# THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 4.

NEW YORK, AUGUST 18, 1827.

VOL. 2.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

THE TRAVELS OF SCARMENTADO.

[Translated from the French of Voltaire for the Correspondent.]

*Continued from page 19.*

On my arrival, however, I was much surprised to find that there were more Christian churches in Turkey than in Candia. I even saw vast troops of monks, who made their orisons to the Virgin Mary, and abused Mahomet without molestation; some in Greek, some in Latin, and others again in Arminian; but they could not rest without abusing each other, as well. Slaves as they were, they quarrelled like dogs; and like them, too, when they became troublesome, were beaten into harmony by their masters, with good cudgels.

At the time of my arrival, the grand vizier extended his favor to the Greeks. Their patriarch accused me of having paid a visit to the chief priest of the Latins, and I was condemned in full divan to receive a hundred strokes of the bastinado upon the soles of my feet; or, if I should feel any scruples of conscience, I had the choice of a fine of 500 sequins instead. The next week, the grand vizier was strangled, and his successor, who, of course, was friendly to the Latins, took umbrage at my going to supper with the Greeks, and bestowed upon me the same compliment once more. My sequins were too desirable to be allowed to rest in my own coffers. I then determined to have nothing more to do with either Greek or Latin; and, to pass away the time, I hired a charming young Circassian, as lovely as the morning, and more tender than a turtle dove, but, unfortunately for me, as devout as an old woman. One night, in the transports of her affection, she cried out "Alla, Illa, Alla." I thought these were expressions of fondness, and also cried out, "Alla, Illa, Alla." "Ah!" exclaimed my Circassian, "blessed be Mahomet! You are a mussulman." I tried in vain to convince her that I was only thinking of a young girl, not of an old prophet. The next morning the Iman came to circumcise me; and, as I made some objections, the cadi, who was one of the most humane and tender hearted of cadis, proposed to empale me in the most admirable manner. I got off for another thousand, and fled into Persia, resolving to hear no more masses, Greek, or Latin, and to be very careful how I cried out, Alla, Illa, Alla.

The first thing they asked me at Ispahan, was whether I was for the black or the white sheep. I replied that I was quite indifferent as to the color, provided the flesh was tender; for I did not know that the priests

had made a question of religion of the black and the white sheep. They accused me of turning their religion into ridicule, [which, by the way, was quite unnecessary;] and so I found myself involved in a most violent affair, even before I had got through the gates. It cost me a great many more of my sequins, to get rid of the sheep.

From thence I pushed on to China, which, my interpreter assured me, was, of all countries in the world, the most agreeable and the most free. The Tartars had just made themselves masters of it, after wasting all with fire and sword; and the reverend fathers the jesuits, on the one hand, and the reverend fathers the Dominicans, on the other, declared that they were gaining innumerable souls to God, without any body knowing any thing of the matter. I never saw such zealous convertists: they persecuted each other; they wrote to Rome whole volumes of accusations and calumnies; and damned their own souls, over and over again, to secure that of a miserable pagan. In particular, they had a horrible war between themselves, concerning the method of making a bow. The jesuits wished the Chinese to salute their fathers and mothers in the Chinese manner, while the Dominicans insisted that it should be after the fashion of the Romans. For my sins, the jesuits took it into their heads that I was a Dominican; and they represented me to his Chinese majesty as a spy of the pope. The supreme council charged a mandarin, who ordered a sergeant, who commanded four sbirri, to seize me, and tie me carefully hand and foot; and, after a hundred and forty genuflexions, I was led into the presence of his majesty. He asked me if I was a spy of the pope, and whether that prince intended to come in person to dethrone him? I answered, that the pope was a priest of 70 years of age; that his dominions were 4000 leagues from those of his most sacred Tartaro-Chinese majesty; that he had about 2000 soldiers, who mounted guard with umbrellas; that he never dethroned any body, and that his majesty might sleep in perfect security. This was the least fatal of all my misfortunes; for they only banished me to Macao, from whence I embarked once more for Europe.

On the coast of Golconda, I found that my ship wanted repairing, and I took advantage of the delay to go and see the court of the great Aureng-Zebe, of whom so many wonders have been told. He was then at Delhi. I had the satisfaction of being present at the imposing ceremony, with which he received the celestial present sent him by the sheriff of Mekka: this was the broom with which the holy mansion, the Caaba, had been swept, and which cleanses all the corruptions of the soul. Aureng-Zebe did not appear to stand in need of it, for he was the most pious man in all Hindostan. It is true, he had cut the throat of one of his brothers, and poisoned his father; twenty rajahs and as many ourahs had perished by his orders under the torture; but all that was nothing: his devotion was the only theme of his priests and ministers, and they could compare him to nobody but his majesty, the most serene emperor of Morocco, Muley Ismael, who never cut off a head without first saying prayers. For my part, I said nothing; I had learned something by my travels, and I was well aware that it was not for me to decide between these two august sovereigns. But a young Frenchman who lived with me was indiscreet enough to say, in the presence of my

interpreter, that there were in Europe very pious monarchs, who governed their people well, and who even went to church, without killing their fathers or brothers, or cutting off the heads of their subjects. I went instantly and loaded my camels. We set off, the Frenchman and I, without a moment's delay. I have since learned, that, on the very same night, the officers of the great Aureng-Zebe came to seize us, but they only found my interpreter. He was publicly executed, and every body agreed that there was no great harm done.

I had now only to visit Africa, to have seen the beauties of all our eastern hemisphere—and I saw that too. My vessel was taken by negro corsairs, who carried us all into the interior, where they offered us the option of working in their fields, or of having our noses and ears cut off. We were not long deliberating. At the end of a year I was ransomed, and returned to Candia. I have now seen every thing that is good and beautiful and admirable upon the earth, and am determined to wander no more from my native land.

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APOCRYPHAL GOSPELS.

*Continued from page 23.*

*Simon.*—Cæsar Nero, listen unto me. Dismiss these fellows from thy presence, in order that I, when I shall come before my Father who is in heaven, may show favor to thee.

*Nero.*—And how know we this, that thou wilt ascend into heaven?

*Simon.*—Command that a tower of strong timber be raised for me, and that it shall be placed in the field of Mars, that I may ascend thereon; and when I shall have ascended, I will command my angels that they descend from heaven before me, and that they bear me up to heaven to my Father, to the end thou mayest know I have been sent from thence. For they cannot come to me on earth, among sinners.

*Nero.*—I will see if thou wilt accomplish that which thou sayest.

*Simon.*—Command it, then, to be done quickly, that thou mayest see.

Then Nero caused a tower to be erected in the field of Mars, and commanded all the people and all the authorities to assemble, and see this spectacle. So next day the emperor Nero, with the senate, and Roman knights, and all the people, came into the field of Mars to this exhibition. And when all were assembled, the emperor commanded that Peter and Paul should be present in the assemblage; and, as soon as they were brought before him, he saith unto them, The truth is now about to be made known.

*Peter and Paul.*—It is not we who shall expose this man, but the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who he hath falsely asserted himself to be.

And Paul, having turned to Peter, said, It behoveth me to kneel to God in prayer: Do thou speak if thou seest Simon attempt any thing, for thou wert first chosen of the Lord.

And, kneeling down, Paul prayed before all the people. But Peter kept his eye on Simon, saying, Begin that which thou hast undertaken; for the time of thy exposure is near; when we shall be acknowledged by this generation. For I see Christ, who hath called me, and Paul also.

*Nero.*—And whither will ye go, contrary to my will?

*Peter.*—Whither the Lord shall call us.

*Nero.*—And who is your Lord?

*Peter.*—The Lord Jesus Christ, whom I behold, and by whom we are called.

*Nero.*—And will ye ascend into heaven?

*Peter.*—We shall go wherever it shall be the will of him who calleth us.

*Simon.*—That thou mayest know, O emperor, that these are impostors, I will, very soon after my ascension into heaven, send my angels, and they shall bring thee to me.

*Nero.*—Do then as thou hast said.

Then Simon mounted on the top of the tower before all the people, his hands spread out, and crowned with laurel, and he began to fly.

Nero having seen this, thus addressed Peter:

*Nero.*—This Simon is true; but thou and Paul are seducers.

*Peter.*—Thou wilt soon see that we are the true disciples of Christ; and that he is not the Christ, but a magician and an enchanter.

*Nero.*—Do ye yet persist in your falsities? Behold, ye see him ascend even into heaven.

*Peter* (to Paul.)—Paul, raise thy head and behold.

And when Paul had raised his head, his eyes filled with tears, and had seen Simon flying, he spoke thus:

*Paul* (to Peter.)—Peter, why dost thou delay? Fulfil that which thou hast undertaken, for now are we called of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And Nero, hearing them, laughed and said,

*Nero.*—They see already they are defeated, and they actually are in despair.

*Peter.*—Thou shalt find that we are not in despair.

*Paul* (to Peter.)—Do quickly that which thou hast to do.

Then Peter, looking up towards Simon, called out, I conjure you, ye angels of Satan, who bear this man through the air, to deceive the hearts of unfaithful men, by God the creator of all things, and by Jesus Christ, that ye instantly cease bearing him, and that ye abandon him.

And he, being immediately forsaken, fell down in the place called the Sacred Way; and, being divided into four parts, he beat together four stones into one, which serves yet as a witness to the victory of the apostles unto this day.

Then Paul raised his head at the noise which was made by his striking the ground, and said, We give thanks to thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, who hast justified us, and hast unmasked Simon the magician, and hast proved that in verity we are thy disciples.

Then Nero, full of wrath, caused Peter and Paul to be put in chains, and had the body of Simon strictly watched for three days and three nights, thinking he would come to life the third day.

*Peter.*—Thou deceivest thyself, O emperor. He will not rise again; for he is certainly dead, and condemned to everlasting pains.

*Nero.*—What hath caused you to commit such a crime?

*Peter.*—His obstinacy; and, if thou couldst discern it, it is well for him that he hath perished, that his great blasphemies against God might not



be multiplied, which would have caused his punishment to have been heavier.

*Nero.*—You have practised before me your suspicious arts, and on that account, for so bad an example, I will destroy you.

*Peter.*—Not that thou willest, but that which hath been promised us must of necessity be accomplished.

*To be continued.*

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CLEAR FACTS.

Dear Sir—Accept my thanks for the copy of the “Antidote” containing some crude remarks on my collection of “Historical Facts,” &c. As soon as you have published the whole of my “Triumph of Truth,” and the clergy have finished their remarks on it, you will receive my expose on their futility. And, as an evidence of the sandy foundation on which their first remarks rest, I will inform them, that instead of my extract being taken from the French, or any deistical encyclopædia, as they suppose, it is taken from their own thorough going Dobson’s Encyclopædia.

Nay, I can assure them, that in the whole of my collection of “Historical Facts,” &c. which now amount to near 250, there is not a single line that is taken from any deistical writer whatever. My doubts concerning the Bible are the offspring of my own mind, and drawn exclusively from works devoted to inspiration, or from authors who are consulted by the clergy.

In the mean time, as the clergy have been pleased to address to me another essay, containing what they style 8 “*Clear Points*,” but which are the muddiest “clear points” I ever saw, I do not think it worth while to trouble you, or the clergy, with any new matter until my present stock has been published. Yet, upon a second thought, I think I may as well furnish them with the five following “Clear” Facts, which will be sufficient to refute 8000 of such “Clear Points,” instead of 8.

It is a “clear” fact, that every religion known on the globe was founded on miracles.

It is a “clear” fact, that miracles have never flourished except in ages of ignorance, or among nations buried in the most abject superstition.

It is a “clear” fact, that not a single miracle has ever been performed since the dawn of philosophy, or in the presence of an enlightened people, Prince Hohenlohe’s excepted.

It is a “clear” fact, that wherever ignorance and superstition have erected their throne, these miracles flourish as plentiful as ever to the present day; as witness the numerous miracles still performed in all the catholic countries by your mother church.

It is a “clear” fact, that the miracles of Prince Hohenlohe are better authenticated than any in your Bible, for they were performed in an enlightened age, and among our enlightened selves. Yet, what do they prove? Why, that catholics possess the necessary *quantum* of ignorance and superstition to enjoy the felicity of working miracles.

Very respectfully yours,

C. SCHULTZ.

## TRIUMPH OF TRUTH.

*Continued from page 28.*

59. It is a fact, that all your priests pronounce Moses to have been the greatest and most learned man that Egypt ever produced. But

60. It is a fact, that Moses had not attained to their highest grade of learning or mysteries; because he was yet ignorant of one of their sublime doctrines—that of the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments—as also that of the great antiquity of this world and the universe. And we confidently challenge the Jewish and Christian world to produce even a single verse in all Moses's writings that will disprove these facts. If, therefore, the whole of Moses's system of theology consisted in his knowledge of the unity of God, as is really the fact, then it is manifest that he never was initiated into the higher mysteries of his Egyptian countrymen. It is a fact, that, as the Egyptians had a small temple or *sanctum sanctorum*, within each large temple, Moses resolved to imitate all the Egyptian systems and policy that were practicable to a wandering nation like his; and for that purpose it was, that he invented his ark of the covenant, or tabernacle, one of the most admirable political engines ever used by a statesman.

61. It is a fact, that after Moses once got his God shut up in his cage of shittim wood, he could make him say or do whatever the keeper pleased!

62. It is a fact, that as the orientals never recorded a single natural event without magnifying it into a miracle, so are we bound to consider the numerous miracles of Moses as nothing more than exaggerated stories; and all founded on some such extraordinary but simple facts to which we have traced his "blossomed rod" and "burning bush." Those who are desirous of seeing our expose of all the miracles of Moses, must wait until our "Review of the Law" is published.

63. It is a fact, that our explanation of the manner in which those two miracles was performed were published more than a year ago, in the east as well as the west, and yet no priest has dared to refute us.

64. It is a fact, that Moses was totally ignorant of the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments. And will any impartial inquirer after truth say, that God would leave his first and greatest prophet ignorant of the two most important doctrines in theology? Nay; that would be an insult to the wisdom of even a heathen god.

65. It is a fact, that if we had the same chance as Moses, with the same mass of ignorance and superstition to operate upon, we could produce as many miracles as he has done. And, as many may peruse this who have not seen our "Biblical Challenge to Bishop Hobart and every clergy," we will cite a part of our explanation of one of those miracles: "Now, the whole art and mystery in performing the trick of the 'blossomed rod,' lay in this, Moses contemplated performing this miracle some weeks before he announced it publicly; and, for that purpose, had selected for Aaron two rods from the almond tree, so near alike as not to be easily distinguished from each other; one of the rods remained on the almond tree, while the other was partly immersed in lukewarm water,

and placed in the holiest place, where no one, excepting Moses and Aaron, were allowed to enter. In a few weeks that part of the rod which was above the water could have 'budded and brought forth buds,' and in two or three more would have 'blossomed with blossoms,' with some buds unopened, while the tree from which it was taken exhibited no such phenomena. And, as soon as this rod was ready, Moses commanded the twelve rods to be placed in the tabernacle over night; during which, he withdrew Aaron's barren rod and substituted the other in its place. And lo! in the morning, 'it had budded and brought forth buds, and blossomed with blossoms!' As to its 'yielding almonds,' that was but a trifling fiction of Moses, by way of embellishment, after the custom of his Egyptian countrymen," &c.

66. It is a fact, that Moses's romance of Joseph and his progenitors, king Abram and queen Sarah, are nothing more than a part of the usual fictions, adopted by every nation in ancient times, in order to conceal a more disgraceful origin.

67. It is a fact, that the Chinese, a nation more ancient than the Jews, adopted a similar mode, in order to conceal the disgraceful origin of that people; for

68. It is a fact, that they are descended from the Hindoos, the most ancient nation on this globe, but from a tribe of criminals or outcasts, who were condemned to servitude or banishment.

69. It is a fact, that facts, as glaring as the noonday sun to the eyes of the impartial, still continue dark as their darkness in Egypt to every priestridden people.

70. It is a fact, that Christianity has ruled the civilized world for 1800 years.

71. It is a fact, that the only influence of Christianity during all that period, among the various nations who professed it, was to be seen in the universal systems of ignorance and superstition which prevailed over its votaries.

72. It is a fact, that nothing but persecution, with endless wars, misery, and woes, was the lot of the Christian world during nearly all that time.

73. But it is a solemn fact, that Philosophy made her appearance only about two hundred years ago; and, ever since the moment of her birth, happiness has blessed the nations once more! But had heaven prevented her appearance altogether, then Christianity would still have been buried in the same state of ignorance and superstition, and permitted her votaries to persecute, hang, burn, and destroy each other, in honor of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary!!

74. It is a fact, that the awful experiment of Christianity has been tried for about 1600 years, and failed to produce the least fruit of national happiness. It is, therefore, deserving of no higher name than that of a "quack" religion.

75. It is a fact, and admitted by the most learned Christians, that the Shaster or Bible of Brahma was written about 1400 years before Moses was born.

76. Another fact is also admitted, which is, that the Palis, an ancient people of Hindostan, actually carried their sacred writings into Egypt.

*To be continued.*

## ANTICIPATIONS.

Mr. Editor—There is no doubt but the stranger black coat, who advised the traveller to extinguish his light, was a *priest*; and in our days so much inclined are these dark clad gentry to “love darkness rather than light,” that, when we try to secure our little torch from their damper, they force us away, denounce, and curse to hell. With me, also, there is little doubt, that a reputed poison must be felt to be most “killing” to that which it affects, when it calls into immediate existence an “Antidote,” although that antidote be only quackery; and there is quackery in theology as well as in physic; and what the quack hates as poison, the true physician often administers in cure of the patient. I have gained by observation, that the defeated religious opponent betrays his decline and fall by heat, reproach, and cursing, as the wounded bird discovers her broken wing by an unavailing flutter. Yet, although the defeated one is foolish in her awkward flutter, we, who aimed the fatal shaft, should only calmly approve the unerring aim, and let the *wound itself* inflict all the pain which grows out of the encounter.

There is a time when a corrupt and wicked thing becomes ripe and falls, like fruit in autumn; and there have been times when that which was upheld by power has, by that same power, been weakened and destroyed. The people of these states have, because of ancestry and education, believed in and supported Christianity; and this same people will, in time, through knowledge and science, decline all support to its system, and respect to its doctrines. For it is admitted, I believe, that this nation will, in their ignorance, become bigots and fanatics; or, under their constitution and laws, stand forth a beacon to political and religious freedom; and who doubts as to the course they will take, when it is considered, that the *youth* of these states have cast off the fear, and, with it, the yoke of religious tyrants? Fifty years hence, whoever presents to my spectacled sight a bigot or fanatic, of twenty-one years of age, shall have my loveliest daughter in wedlock and half my fortune, if, in the mean time, priests shall consent to perform my marriage ceremony, and their “Providence” grant me wealth.

When our first century shall be completed; when, Mr. Editor, your society shall meet on that nation’s birthday, and find the “bird of Jove” perched over the glorious motto, “Fourth of July, 1900; Rights of Man, and Common Sense,” then, indeed, shall nothing more have taken place than I most fully anticipate, and hope to see; and no more fruit will have become ripe than is now in spring time sown.

E. P. H.

## MIRACLES.

Mr. Editor—It is well known that most, if not all, of the devotees of the prevailing systems of religion claim, as a circumstance to confirm the truth or divinity of their respective systems, that they are founded on miracles. But, so far from this circumstance being a confirmation of the truth or divinity of a religion, I should consider it direct to the contrary. For what is a miracle but an occurrence that takes place in the presence



of witnesses, who do not understand (in consequence of their ignorance) the causes by which the thing is produced or made to appear. Some, we have reason to believe, know the causes, who still represent them as miracles to their deluded followers. But, to those who are sincere, the moment the causes are understood by which an occurrence takes place, it ceases to be a miracle. Hence, if we consider the Almighty Ruler of the universe an unchangeable being, and that he governs the world by laws immutable, we have every reason to believe that no occurrence can take place in the view of man independent of some physical, moral, or natural cause. It is in proportion to the ignorance of every age and country that miracles abound; a fact confirmed by the history of all ages and nations. As the people of every country have progressed in correct knowledge, miracles, supernatural predictions, and witchcraft have declined, until among the most refined nations they have entirely ceased. But miracles, now and then, take place in catholic countries, though more frequently in the eastern parts of Asia, a land that ever has been fertile in prodigies, as it ever has been in oppression and ignorance, since the time that the Jews exterminated the Canaanites.

If it be admitted that miracles performed by the founders or authors of a religion are a confirmation of the truth or divinity of its origin, we may as well say that ignorance is also a confirmation, because as religion, with such proofs or confirmations, must originate with an ignorant age or nation, the witnesses who transmit the testimony of the religion to succeeding generations must have a very superficial knowledge of natural or moral causes.

OBSERVER.

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 CHRISTIAN MASSACRES.

Mr. Editor—I lately read in one of our city papers some verses, called A Hymn for St. Stephen's day, said to be written by a bishop Heber, the four first lines of which attracted my notice. They are as follows:

“The son of God is gone to war,  
A kingly crown to gain;  
His blood-red banner streams afar!  
Who follows in his train?”

On reading these lines the mind involuntarily recurs to the cruel wars and inhuman massacres which have been perpetrated to establish the godship of the reputed son of an obscure woman of Nazareth, called Mary. The emperor Constantine, after having put to death his wife, his uncle, and his son, applied to the priests of Jupiter to be absolved from his crimes, and, on being repulsed, first unfurled this bloody banner; and, in the name of the son of God, immolated tens of thousands of human beings. The standard bearers have all been well remunerated for their services in this warfare. Bishop Heber, lately deceased, bore this banner at Calcutta, and no doubt received about ten thousand pounds sterling a year for his zeal in rendering the people subservient to despotism.

VERBUM SAT.

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**NEW YORK, SATURDAY, AUGUST 18, 1827.**

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LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

*On the inconsistencies, absurdities, and contradictions of the Bible.*  
*By the Secretary.*

LECTURE FIFTH.

*Continued.*

Before I enter on an exposition of the striking conformity that exists between the Christian religion and that of the orientals, I shall offer a few remarks on the narrative part of what is called the account of the Fall of Man, by which we will be enabled to form a proper estimate of its truth or probability.

It is said that the serpent, being a more subtle or cunning animal than any other beast which the Lord God had made, approached mother Eve, and addressed her in a language which she understood. The dialogue which passed at this *tete-a-tete* is somewhat brief in the book of Genesis; but the learned Dr. Burnet, in his *Archæologiæ Philosophicæ*, endeavors to supply the deficiency. He says, "It happened, when Eve at one time was sitting solitary under the tree of knowledge, there came to her a serpent or adder; which, though I know not by what means or power, civilly accosted the woman (if we may judge of the thing by the event) in these words, or to this purpose:

*Serpent.*—All hail! most fair one. What are you doing so solitary and serious under this shade?

*Eve.*—I am contemplating the beauty of this tree.

*Serpent.*—It is truly an agreeable sight, but much pleasanter are the fruits thereof. Have you tasted them, my lady?

*Eve.*—I have not, because God has forbidden us to eat of this tree.

*Serpent.*—What do I hear! Who is that God that envies his creatures the innocent delights of Nature? Nothing is sweeter; nothing more wholesome than this very fruit. Why then should he forbid it, unless, indeed, he were in jest?

*Eve.*—But he has forbid it us on pain of death.

*Serpent.*—Undoubtedly you mistake his meaning. This tree has nothing that would prove fatal to you, but rather something divine, and above the common influence of Nature.

*Eve.*—I can give you no answer, but will first go to my husband, and then do as he thinks.

*Serpent.*—Why should you trouble your husband about such a trifle? Use your own judgment.

*Eve.*—Let me see—had I best touch it or not? What can be more beautiful than this apple? How sweetly it smells! But, perhaps, it tastes bad.

*Serpent.*—Believe me—it is worthy to be eaten by the angels themselves. Do but try, and, if it tastes bad, throw it away, and say I am a great deceiver.

*Eve.*—Well, I'll try then. Thou hast not deceived me: it has, indeed, a most agreeable flavor. Give me another, that I may carry it to my husband.

*Serpent.*—Very well thought on. Here is another apple for you. Go to your husband with it. Farewell, happy young woman!"

In the recent Travels of Bowdich in Africa, a number of curious traditions are mentioned as existing among the Mandingo Mahometans, one of which relates to the creation and fall of man, which a Marabout repeated to Mrs. Bowdich. By this account it appears, that it was *jealousy* of another female, excited in the bosom of Eve, which led to the fatal catastrophe: God (says this tradition) created Adam of sand, without any soul; and Ybleess, or the great devil, having been made previously, found him lying down, and despised him, saying, "This is mere sand, shall it presume to be a companion for me?" And he spate upon Adam. God hearing this, instantly gave Adam a soul, who rose, and being angry, tried to throw a ball of sand at Ybleess, and said, "I will not serve him." For doing all this, God turned Ybleess out of heaven, but took Adam there, and kept him 300 years, when he created Howa, a woman, for him, and they were permitted to eat of every thing in heaven, but one sort of fruit. Adam knew Ybleess, from the above circumstance, but Howa did not. Ybleess feeling his soul on fire, went and demanded of God payment or reward for all the prayers and good works which he had performed in his previous life. God asked him what pay he wanted. Ybleess replied, "I want company in the fire." God answered, "Go then, and try to make people wicked if you can, but I shall not make people to put them in the fire, for the sake of keeping you company." Ybleess thanked him, and went to Howa, to whom he said, "All the fruit in heaven is good, but this surpasses every other; why then do you not eat of it?" Howa said, "My husband told me not." Ybleess returned, "Your husband deceives you; God never said so, for it is the best fruit of all, and Adam wants it for another woman." "But there is no other woman." "Yes there is; but you have been kept ignorant of her existence." Howa then ate three fruits, and took two more, which she put under the pillow of the bed, and then charged Adam with the other woman. Adam swore it was false; and Howa replied, "Swear not, but eat of this fruit, and I will believe." He began to eat, and God sent Gabriel to prevent him. Gabriel seized Adam by the throat to prevent his swallowing it (which made man have what is called Adam's apple.) God then told Ybleess, if any one met him they might kill him. God called Adam three times, and said, "For this which you have done, I must create one earthly world for your descendants, for you and they will be unfit for heaven now; and you must descend to this earth, where you will find trouble every day, and even that which you think good will prove to be evil. Go to it then." God then sent him a little book called Chosan, and told him to go and wash, and to wash his heart first, then to pray; and said, "You must die, but after death you shall come to heaven."

Whether this or the Bible story should be adopted; or whether we are to believe that it was the beauty and flavor of the fruit, the seducing voice of the tempter, or jealousy of a rival, that predominated in Eve's breast, the whole narrative contains so many absurd and puerile

statements, and displays such ignorance of the laws of Nature, that it is impossible to employ the least reflection on it without rejecting the whole as a silly, senseless fable.

A serpent is made to speak to a woman, as if it were quite a common thing for beasts to talk; and that woman not only was no way surprised at the circumstance, but, as appears by the Bible story, she did not even entertain the least suspicion of the serpent's intention to deceive her; and submitted her reason to a reptile which had been made subject to her, instead of going to her husband to inquire of him as to the propriety or impropriety of what the serpent had said. Dr. Adam Clark, in his Commentary on the 3d chapter of Genesis, has endeavored to prove that Eve was not tempted by a serpent, but by a species of the ourang outang. This, however, does not remove the difficulty, for the ourang outang has not the faculty of speech. According to Josephus, all living creatures, before Adam, ate of the tree of knowledge, and had the same language. Plato says, that in Satan's reign wild beasts could converse together, and also with men, who were like them in primeval purity and native ignorance. Brown, the author of *Religio Medici*, remarks, that there are some who wonder, as well they may, at the simplicity of Eve, "that when the serpent told her the eating of that fruit would make them like gods, she did not question the beast, Why he himself did not eat of it?"

It is, indeed, a matter of surprise, that a being so perfect as man—the workmanship of Omnipotence and Wisdom, that had infused into him a portion of his own divine essence, and pronounced the work superlatively good—should have been so easily deceived by a reptile. Nothing can reconcile the absurdity but a *quantum sufficit* of that grace, which, Christians tell us, is the gift of heaven, but which, it would seem, God has learned from the abuse of his liberality to Adam and Eve, to keep entirely under his own charge, that he may have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and consign to everlasting perdition such as he pleases; and that not for any good or evil that they are capable of performing, but to display his ineffable, incomprehensible, and mysterious workings among the sons of men!

Some, with the view of endeavoring to reconcile the palpable absurdity of a serpent possessing powers of argument sufficient to overcome the scruples of Eve, have resorted to the plea of female weakness. But, supposing that the first woman, notwithstanding what is said about the perfection of her nature, was the weaker vessel, why, I would ask, was she exposed alone to the wiles of the most cunning beast which Deity had thought proper to make? Would it not have been more consistent with justice to have placed some assistant or agent to afford succor, in case of need, to an ignorant, weak woman? She had as yet neither witnessed the rise nor setting of the sun. She had no experience to guide her as to the course she should pursue in relation to the objects with which she was surrounded. According to the Christian theology, the everlasting salvation of all future generations depended on the part she had to act. Was it not, then, the incumbent duty of the being who placed her in a situation of such tremendous responsibility, either to arm her sufficiently to withstand the assault, or to allot her a guard of superior agents? Nothing of the kind was done. This poor, feeble creature, en-



tirely unacquainted with the existence of animals more cunning than herself, was left alone to fall a victim to their subtilty. Even her husband, her natural guardian, helpmate, and protector was purposely kept out of the way, that her defeat might be the more certain.

*To be continued.* 75.

*Strang's Sentence.*—We have perused the sentence passed by Judge Duer on the murderer Strang, with feelings of surprise and regret. That a judge, who derives his authority from the *civil* institutions of the country, should, in pronouncing judgment on a criminal, resort to *religion* for arguments to make an impression on the mind of the culprit, is, in our apprehension, highly unjustifiable, and bespeaks a disposition so nearly allied to an union of "church and state," that whenever any symptom of this appears, it ought always to be reprobated. In countries where Christianity is "part and portion" of the law of the land, the judges, as a matter of course, exercise the prerogative of enforcing obedience, and of denouncing crime by considerations drawn from the established faith. But, in the United States, where the constitution does not recognize any form of religion, and expressly declares that congress shall not legislate on the subject, every attempt of those holding office to introduce it, or to avail themselves of any of its dogmas, for the purpose of sanctioning, or giving a color to their decisions or proceedings, is a violation of the principles which form one of the brightest features of the Union.

But Judge Duer has not contented himself with innovating on our political institutions. He has unwarrantably and *extra* officially gone out of his road, in order to have an opportunity of denouncing *liberal* opinions, by endeavoring to create an impression that the wretched man who stood before him to receive sentence was what is called an *infidel*, and that the principles stigmatized by that and other illiberal epithets had been the cause of his moral depravity. His words are, addressing himself to Strang, "*Perhaps* you doubt there is a God; and, from the selfish obstinacy of your conduct, as well as from *reports* founded on your own confessions, which, though *not officially before us*, have, from their notoriety, reached our ears, we fear that your heart has been long since hardened, and your mind darkened into *atheism*; that *infidelity* was the source of an early and intense depravity, and the ultimate cause of your last most aggravated and heinous crime."

It is a maxim, founded on the most obvious principles of law, to say nothing of equity, that a judge who assumes the right to give an opinion, in any case, before hearing the parties, and the witnesses on both sides, can never be regarded as a competent, far less an impartial umpire. By volunteering even an expression favorable to the one party or the other, previous to the close of the trial, he evinces a partiality that unfits him for the important station he holds, and which, in many cases, would be attended with the most mischievous consequences. We do not say, nor do we mean to say, that the judge, on the trial of Strang, displayed any appearance of this nature. On the contrary, we are inclined to believe, from all the accounts that have reached us, that he conducted himself

with the utmost propriety during the whole of the trial. But here his conduct ceases to meet with approbation; for no sooner does he feel himself released from those restraints which the dignity of the office imposes, than he assumes a new character, and launches out in uncalled for declamation against the supposed theological opinions of the prisoner. He does not ask for proofs of Strang's alleged "atheism" or "infidelity." It is with him a *supposition* only; a "*perhaps*;" a rumor, resting on mere "*reports*;" "not officially before us." What right had this judge to tell even the murderer, on such evidence as this, "that infidelity was the source" of his depravity? Who gave him the power of searching the hearts of men, and of tracing their motives to whatever source his own perverted imagination might lead him? Religious fanatics, with their disordered minds, suppose that all liberal men are bloodthirsty monsters; whereas, every truly philosophic person abhors bloodshed, and, in many instances, the shedding of the blood of other animals as human food. A man who exercises his own judgment in matters of religion, must necessarily be of a strong mind, and of a sound intellect—a thinking being, free from all rashness. How impolitic, then, was it in this judge, on a mere surmise, on the vague and idle "reports" of the day, and, confessedly, when the matter was "*not officially*" before him, to wander out of his course, and to pronounce his victim either an atheist or an infidel? And how doubly impolitic and short sighted was it, to attempt to trace the depravity of which a man had been guilty during his whole life, and the enormous crime which had brought him to an untimely end, to the operation of certain principles on his mind, of the existence of which there was not a shadow of evidence?

From the whole complexion of the sentence it is evident, that the judge himself is a fanatic, or that, in this instance, he played the hypocrite to obtain popularity among the fanatics with which he is surrounded. He cants about "the divine mercy," "eternal punishment," the "intercession of the Saviour," and the "influence of the holy spirit," as if these dogmas were settled points; when he ought to have known, or to have acknowledged if he did know, that the basis on which the whole fabric rests is in a tottering condition. Would it not have been a wiser course, instead of telling the wretched criminal that he merited damnation for not believing what are called "gospel truths," to have shown him how far the "gospel" was entitled to that appellation; to have demonstrated, not only to the prisoner, but for the satisfaction of all who heard him, or who might afterwards peruse his address, that the books held sacred among Christians are authentic records, and that every thing they contain is indisputably the word of God? If Strang actually disbelieved the Bible, of what use was it to threaten him with the punishment which it denounces on disbelief? He might as well have been told, that by becoming a Mahometan, or a Hindoo, he would be entitled to a seat in paradise.

The *very merciful* sentiments uttered by the judge, while they strictly coincide with the spirit of that religion which he professes, afford ample room for an exposure, every way calculated to exhibit the folly of endeavoring to perpetuate a system, which, even without being assailed by argument, must fall to the ground through its own absurdity. We shall take an early opportunity of returning to the subject.

*Removal.*—On *Monday* next the office of the *Correspondent* will be removed to *No. 15 Chamber street*, near the *Apprentices' Library*.

*Printing* in all its branches, also *Bookbinding*, neatly and expeditiously executed, on the most reasonable terms. Orders for books, in every department of literature, punctually attended to.

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### MISCELLANEOUS.

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*Armenians.*—The burying place of the Armenians occupies a space of near an hundred acres, on a hill that overlooks the Bosphorus. The Turks, on the death of a friend, plant a young cypress over his grave; their burying ground therefore consists of extensive groves of these trees, which they reserve exclusively to themselves. The Armenians generally plant on such occasions a tree which yields a resinous gum of a strong aromatic odor, which fills the air, and corrects the exhalations from the graves. They grow to a large size, and form very picturesque objects in a landscape. Their cemetery on the Bosphorus is covered with these trees; and, from its elevated situation, the view it commands, and the view it presents, is perhaps the most interesting grove in the world. Here whole Armenian families, of two or three generations together, are constantly seen sitting round the tombs, and holding visionary communications with their departed friends. According to their belief, the souls of the dead pass into a place called *Gayank*, which is not a purgatory, for they suffer neither pain nor pleasure, but retain a perfect consciousness of the past. From this state they may be delivered by the alms and prayers of the living, which the pious Armenians give liberally for their friends. Easter Monday is the great day on which they assemble for this purpose; but every Sunday, and frequently week days, are devoted to the same object. The priest who accompanies them first proceeds to the tombs, and reads the prayers for the dead, in which he is joined by the family. They then separate into groups, or, singly sitting down by favorite graves, call its inhabitants about them, and, by the help of a strong imagination, really seem to converse with them. This pious and pensive duty being performed with their dead friends, they retire to some pleasant spot near the place, where provisions had been previously brought, and cheerfully enjoy the society of the living.

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*Gain and Godliness.*—There is nothing that sets men more against innovations in matters of religion than when they see that the change of worship would put a stop to their trade, and be "*lucrum cessans, et damnum emergens*," gain sinking and loss rising. What was the cause of the popular commotion, which made that outcry (when St. Paul was preaching) "*Great is Diana of the Ephesians?*" Was it not from the remonstrance of one Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines for Diana, which brought no small gain to the craftsmen? He assembled them and told them, "*Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth;*" and gave them to understand, that not only their profit, but likewise the advantage of the whole city of Ephesus, was concerned not to suffer one Paul, "who

persuaded and turned away many people, saying, they be no gods which are made with hands." Hence we may conclude, that the inhabitants of Ephesus would have been more tractable, with respect to the gospel, if their great Diana could have been taken away without doing any prejudice to their gain.—*Bayle*.

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*An Infidel's Will.*—Mr. J. Thomas Morrison, a surgeon at Vale Grove, in the parish of St. Luke, Chelsea, recently died, leaving a singular will. To his wife he bequeathed *one shilling*; and to various other persons annuities of different amounts, and among others £50 a year to Richard Carlile, the noted bookseller of Fleet street, his wife, and present family, during their natural lives, "holding such character as more creditable than the profession of any creed whatever." To the churches, "whether pagan, Jewish, Christian, or Mahometan, he leaves his Anathema;" and, if this bequest should lead to the exclusion of his remains from the customary burial ground of his parish, he leaves directions to his executors to purchase a rod of earth for his special accommodation. There are other bequests; and, as all the life annuities fall in, directions are given for investing the amount in the hands of trustees, to be distributed to poor housekeepers of the parish of St. Luke, Chelsea, of good moral character, without regard to their religious faith. Mr. Henry Brougham and Mr. Norcott, of Chelsea, are appointed executors, but both these gentlemen have declined acting.

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*Education.*—I have always observed, says the Margravine of Anspach, that young people, when early corrupted, have become cruel and inhuman; their imaginations, fixed on one object alone, refuse admittance to any other; they are strangers to pity, and devoid of feeling; they would sacrifice father and mother to their smallest gratifications. On the contrary, a young man, brought up in happy simplicity, is drawn by Nature towards the tender and affectionate passions in the first moments—his heart is moved by the sorrows of others—he is filled with joy at the sight of his companions—he is alive to the shame of displeasing, and to the regret of having given offence. If his youthful ardor renders him lively, impetuous, or angry, the moment after, his heart, filled with goodness, shows his readiness to repent of his fault, and he would on any terms purchase pardon from those whom he has wounded. His pride humiliates him, from the tenderness of his sentiments. He quickly feels offended with himself, and even, in the height of his indignation, a word or an excuse disarms him. Youth is not the age of hatred or of vengeance; it is that of commiseration, of clemency, of generosity. And I will venture to maintain, that a youth properly brought up, and who has preserved his innocence to twenty, is at that age the most generous, the most amiable, and the best of men. Experience will prove the truth of my maxim.